increasing the longitudinal shearing surface which would otherwise be required.

The officers of the Section elected for the next year by the Association are Professor F. O. Marvin, of the University of Kansas, for Chairman, and Professor J. Galbraith, of the School of Practical Science, of Toronto, Canada, for Secretary.

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*DEVELOPMENT OF VEGETABLE PHYSIOLOGY.**

There is a certain fitness in bringing before the section of this Association, which has been most recently established, some account of that department of botanical science which is one of the latest to be brought into notice as a grand division of the subject. For vegetable physiology, the topic which is to engage our attention, is like a western or African domain, long inhabited at the more accessible points, more or less explored over the larger portion, but with undefined boundaries in some directions, and with rich and important regions for some time known to the explorer, but only now coming to the attention of the general public. In fact, our domain of vegetable physiology is found to be a diversified one, in some parts by the application of chemical and physical methods yielding rich gold and gems, in other parts coming nearer to every man's daily interests with its fruits and grains. Thus it comes about that, before the public is well acquainted with the name of the science, it has differentiated itself into two or three sciences having quite separate objects in view.

It is the purpose of this address to acquaint you with the growth and present outlines of the group of sciences which for convenience are included under the heading of vegetable physiology, and also to show why they deserve recognition as important constituents of a liberal education along with other natural sciences. The point of view at all times will be that of the American botanist.

In the development of botany in America the science has passed through successive waves or stages of popularity, constantly increasing in momentum, widening its scope by evolution of new interests, and more and more exhibiting virility by its adaptability to the needs of the times. That botany has in it something that may be transmuted into money has only recently been discovered, but it is a discovery that is likely to work benefit not only to the practical man who makes application of scientific truths to commercial ends, but also reciprocally to the investigator who thinks only of uncovering a new fact or establishing a new law. To adequately meet the requirements of modern botany in the way of laboratories, gardens, herbaria, libraries and apparatus requires a capital that not long since would have been deemed fabulous. The money to meet this demand of a growing science must be expected to come in the main as the voluntary contribution of an interested public—the reciprocal response to the attitude of botany toward the general welfare.

I have mentioned the economic aspect of botany thus early, because it is one of the significant changes which has come over the science within the last decade or two, and to which vegetable physiology in some of its features is, I venture to say, about to add further important contributions. Science no longer shrinks into the shadow of the closet for fear of being implored to lend a hand at securing revenue, but steps forth and curiously scrutinizes every process of the practical world, often finding there its most fruitful fields for fundamental research.

The problems of vegetable physiology possess to a greater or less degree a special

*Address of the Vice-President, Section G., American Association for the Advancement of Science at the Springfield Meeting, August 29, 1895.

element of interest not inherent in those of other departments of botanical science. They embrace the dynamical property of motion, which never fails to exercise a fascination over the human mind. Physiology, in fact, deals with what plants do, their methods of activity, their behavior; while the other divisions of botany treat of what plants are, or have been, their form, structure, and relation of parts. The one is the study of the organic machine in action, and the other the contemplation of its component members.

Movement in plants does not attain the rapidity exhibited by animals. Some movements in both cases are ultra-visual, as the translocation of molecules in metabolism, the diffusion of gases, and in plants especially the flow of liquids. In plants even the movements of the organs are comparatively slow. While the leaves of the sensitive plant telegraph plant, and Venus's fly-trap and the petals of certain orchids excite the wonder of the casual beholder, most plant organs move too slowly to be readily detected without mechanical magnification. This does not prove a detraction to the interest of the subject, however, as it has led to the invention of ingenious and complicated machines, whose numerous wheels and bands inspire a sense of importance, particularly appealing to a large class of persons in this age of machinery, and constituting an element in securing favorable attention from the public, while it adds a charm to the work of the investigator, rivalling that of the microscope. It is yet but the dawning of day for the display of mechanical contrivances as aids to botanical research, and the future gives promise of notable achievements. The names of Barnes, Anderson, Stevens, Stone, Golden, Thomas, Frost and Arthur at present are representative of the American inventive spirit in botany. The most perfect and interesting pieces of apparatus yet turned out by them embrace Frost's and Golden's auxanometers for recording the increase in length or thickness of growing organs, Thomas's apparatus for recording the variation in pressure of sap resulting from root action, Anderson's automatic balance for registering the rate and amount of change in the weight of an object used in studying transpiration and growth, and Arthur's clinostat for neutralizing the action of gravity and light, and his centrifugal apparatus for substituting mechanical force for that of gravity.

While having in mind the public interest in our science, it may be well to notice the very small basis of information on which this interest is founded. Only the vaguest notions are current regarding the nutrition of plants, the uses of the leaves, the movements of sap, the purposes of color, and the means by which new positions are assumed. This ignorance is primarily due, of course, to the some cause which has so long delayed the development of the science upon the technical side—the fact that almost nothing can be learned of the functions of plants from direct observation. In regard to the physiology of animals, even the lowest, much may be inferred by observing their behavior and analyzing the phenomena from the human standpoint, but there are no obvious similarities between plants and the higher animals, and it is necessary to resort to careful experimentation and profound study to arrive at a fair understanding of the vital actions of plants. Physiology is an experimental science, and the public must perforce derive its knowledge second hand without much opportunity of verification. It must be admitted that, although a view of this portion of the *res publica naturæ* has its fascination, yet the attainment of vantage ground for the survey is necessarily difficult and slow.

The term public, when used in connection with vegetable physiology, needs to be con-

structed liberally. It will include, without doubt, some able scientists and men of liberal education. I may be permitted to cite an occurrence to which some in this audience were witnesses. Some time since the subject of gases in plants was before the Association and induced an animated discussion. Probably half of those participating confounded respiration, which is a general function of all plants, as well as animals, under all conditions of existence, with the photosyntactic function of fixation of carbon by the green parts of plants in the presence of sunlight. Both processes have to do with oxygen and carbon dioxide, but the resemblance goes no further. It is an error dating back to the last century, when the two processes were discovered, and one for which botanists themselves are by no means without responsibility. Another error not yet dislodged from the cobwebby corners of many a well-read man's intellectual storehouse is the old fiction of a circulation of sap, so dear to those who desire to find analogies in plants with physiological processes of animals. It is not much over fifty years since the learned French Academy exhibited its ignorance of vegetable physiology by awarding the grand prize to an essay founded upon this error; and the error still lives.

But the general ignorance of even the best established and most readily apprehended facts of physiology may be justly extenuated when the pedagogical status of the subject is examined. Botany, as a substantial part of the curriculum, cannot be said to have received recognized standing in the American educational system until the time of Asa Gray. In the latter part of the decade of the thirties his first textbook, the 'Elements of Botany,' appeared, and in the decade following, the 'Text-book for Colleges' and the 'Manual,' all of which works showed a true appreciation of the best features of the science and the needs of the time. They were so well conceived, and so much in demand, that new editions rapidly succeeded one another; and to the present day they hold a high place in the estimation of botanical teachers. These works possessed a specially potent element of virility in being the expression of knowledge at first hand, the words of the master. In so far as inspiration was drawn from foreign sources it came chiefly from French and English scholars, of whom De Candolle the eldest and Robert Brown were the representatives.

A half century ago vegetable physiology, in the fulness of the modern meaning of the words, did not exist. Structural botany was then the dominant phase, and in elementary instruction took the shape of close attention to the form and arrangement of the organs of flowering plants, with the ulterior object of being able readily to determine the names of the plants of the field. Even then physiology presented some attractive features, but they appeared largely extra-territorial, as the title of the book from which most of us received our early botanical pabulum testifies: 'First Lessons in Botany *and* Vegetable Physiology,' by Asa Gray, issued in 1857, and continuing its supremacy as a text-book until 1887, when it was revised and renamed.

In the seventies botanical laboratories began to form a necessary feature of the best institutions, each with its quota of compound microscopes and reagents, in which we followed the example of Germany, such laboratories having been established at Halle, Breslau, Munich and Jena a decade previous, and subsequently at many other centers of learning. With the advent of Sachs's 'Textbook of Botany' in English dress about this time, the science in America took on a new and vigorous phase of development. The method of this work found more convenient expression in Bessey's 'Botany' (1880), which for a decade was

the recognized standard of instruction. A wealth of laboratory guides soon appeared, and American botanists became devotees of microscopic anatomy. I scarcely need call your attention to the triumphal advancement of botany during the decade of the eighties; it is so fresh in every one's mind. It amounted to a revolution; the work of the herbarium was well-nigh abandoned for the study of the cell. Those of the older systematic botanists who took no part in this upheaval became alarmed, and put forth vigorous protests, claiming with much justice that pupils so trained lost breadth of view and proper perspective. An editorial writer in the *Botanical Gazette* very clearly contrasted the two methods of instruction. "The ancient method," said he, "gives a wide range of acquaintance with external forms, a general knowledge of the plant kingdom and its affinities, a living interest in the surrounding flora; but it disregards the underlying morphology of minute structures and chemical processes, the great principles which bring plant life into one organic whole. The modern method, on the contrary," he continues, "takes a few types, carefully examines their minutest structures and life work, and grounds well in general biological principles; but it loses the relation of things, as well as any knowledge of the display of the plant kingdom in its endless diversity, and, worse than all for the naturalist, cultivates no love for a flora at hand and inviting attention. The former is the method of the field, the latter of the laboratory."

But under both ancient and modern methods of instruction, whether the teacher were a systematist or a histologist, whether the pupil pulled apart flowers under a hand lens or dissected tissues under a compound microscope, botany flourished in America. There was, in reality, a better philosophy abroad than usually appeared in practice. The layman, remembering his school days, might assert with Julian Hawthorne that "botany is a sequel of murder and a chronicle of the dead," but the professional botanist, imbued with the spirit of the times, resented the imputation as no fault of the science; and while deploring the well enough known mediævalism and incompetence of teachers, who only disclosed a descriptive and classificatory science, with marvelous wealth of terminology to be sure, but as lifeless and unbiological as mathematics or astronomy, pointed to the motto held by all the progressionists, 'the study of plants as living things.'

The revivifying spirit which was pervading the botanical world, which strove to find in plants more than objects for the glossologist and the cataloguer, which interrogated the plant upon matters of action as if a dumb intelligence, which diffused a new light and a higher significance into every fact of the science, had its source in that all-pervading influence which emanated from the observations and interpretations of Charles Darwin. The brilliant series of works upon the behavior and relationship of plants by this author, beginning with the fertilization of orchids in 1862 and extending through a score of years, left a profound impress upon botanical thought, based as they were upon the connecting thread of evolution. So different now was the point of view that there sprang up what was called the 'new botany.' Although the inspiration of the 'new botany' was general, yet it manifested itself pedagogically chiefly in elementary instruction and in special studies. We may pass the delightful brochure of Asa Gray on 'How Plants Behave' (1872) with a bare mention, as it appeared too early to show any peculiarities of method not familiar to the readers of Darwin, and to call to mind the much less pretentious presentation of the new way as understood by Beal under the title of 'The New Botany' (1881). He

declares it to be a study of 'objects before books,' in which "the pupil is directed and set to thinking, investigating and experimenting for himself." The new method did not fit equally well into all departments of botany, and found its best expression for the most part in developmental and physiological subjects. It was in fact the chief agent in preparing the ground for the crop of physiology that is now being sown, and sown in a field selected and staked out by Darwin and Sachs.

Having shown how the field for the reception of the latest botanical husbandry was prepared, I may now briefly trace the source of the ideas with which it was implanted, and in doing so it is necessary to point out that vegetable physiology, as the term is generally employed, is not a homogeneous science.

The advancement of any subject is promoted by a clear understanding of its outlines, and it is in the interest of clear concepts and convenient usage that certain natural limitations should be respected by physiologists. Not that intergradation and mutual dependence do not occur, but that certain natural boundaries may be more or less distinctly recognized which will throw the subject-matter into sections and simplify the presentation of the numerous facts of the science.

The most obvious distinction to be made in the physiological aspect of organisms is in regard to their maturity. The organism in its embryonic or juvenile condition manifests functional peculiarities of the highest import, quite unlike those of the adult. The physiology of reproduction belongs here, and includes not only a study of the formation and increase of the young plant, that is, embryology, but genesiology as well, that is, the philosophy of the transmission of qualities and powers from the parent to the offspring, both in vegetative and sexual reproduction. It is a curious fact, which Vines has recently called attention to, that even vegetative reproduction, as in the case of the growth of a plant from a cutting, brings about rejuvenescence of the protoplasm, the new individual showing the characters of youth, and not of maturity. In both sexual and asexual reproduction the attention should be focused chiefly upon the behavior of the cell, and a wonderful complexity will be found in these minute structures. The mystery of a world is bound up in this bit of protoplasm, and corresponding to the *multum in parvo* aggregation of properties there seems to be an unsolved intricacy of structure. To the study of what was originally supposed to be essentially homogeneous protoplasm, we have gradually distributed and extended the properties of the cell to the cytoplasm, the plastids, the nucleus, the nucleoli, the fibrillar network, the chromosomes, the centrosomes, the kinoplasmic spindle and the polar bodies. What further distribution of function will eventually be found, it is too early in the history of investigation to prognosticate.

But it is not every dividing cell that points the way to a new individual. Plants with complex structures possess tissues of embryonic character, such as the cambium, whose utmost power of division only leads to the production of additional tissues like those adjoining it, but are wholly incapable of originating a new individual, or even a new organ. From this histogenic extreme all gradations and variations occur, to the perfectly reproductive spore, which by its growth forms another individual without contributing anything to the support of the parent organism.

Beside the elementary riddles of life bound up in the processes of cellular reproduction, or cytiogenesis, there are others, relating to nutrition, growth and irritability, which comprise what animal physiologists group under the term 'cellular physiology,'

for which Professor Verworn, of Jena, made such an impassioned plea in the *Monist* about a year ago. "We find," said he, "that even the minutest cell exhibits all the elementary phenomena of life, that it breathes and takes nourishment, that it grows and propagates itself, that it moves and reacts against stimuli," and he urged that therefore far more attention should be given to this department of physiology, as the key to many complicated processes. The physiological study of the cell, including both its reproductive and vegetative aspects, in so far as they may be considered the nascent functions of the elementary parts of the organism, may be conveniently considered under a single heading, 'caliology.'

Passing to the physiology of the adult organism, a little reflection will show that the activities of the plant may be considered from two standpoints: that of the plant's individual economy, and that of the plant's social economy, or its relation to other plants and animals and the world at large. Looking at the latter phase more closely, we shall find that the subject contains some of the most interesting topics in the range of botany, which appeal especially to the lover of nature, without losing their value as problems of the deepest scientific import. Among the relations of plants to the world at large may be mentioned the influence of climate, the means of protection against rain, drouth and cold, adaptation to the medium in which the plant grows and the establishment of rhythmical periods. Among the relations of plants to animals are those interesting chapters in the pollination of flowers by insects, the contrivances by which plants with a predilection for highly nitrogenous food may capture and feed upon insects, and the means adopted by plants to prevent injury from large animals, which are more or less familiar to the general public through the writings of Charles Darwin. Among the relations of plants to one another comes foremost the struggle for existence, bringing into play the laws of natural selection and the survival of the fittest, together with much else that is now known under the head of evolution, followed by various phases of parasitism, mutualism and other topics. Is it not evident from this hasty and by no means complete outline that here is a portion of physiology which appeals to all classes of thoughtful persons, rich in possibilities for the philosophical and speculative mind, and bristling with queries demanding experimental solution?

Although this department of physiology has received much attention here and there for a long time, and some of its topics are well understood, yet only very recently has it fallen into place as a systematic part of the general subject, and no separate presentation of it has yet appeared in English, and only two works in German. There is some confusion regarding the name of the science. The Germans call it 'biology,' which may serve to emphasize the importance of regarding the plant as a living, plastic being, but is not an exclusory term, and also does violence to its philological derivation. Even the recently proposed modification into phytobiology does not much improve the term. The English usage of the word biology, as so admirably set forth by Huxley, and more or less consistently adopted in this country, leaves no place to introduce the imperfect usage of the Germans. Two years ago, in his wholly delightful 'Chapters in Modern Botany,' Patrick Geddes proposed the term 'bionomics.' The same year, however, a better term was advocated almost simultaneously in England and America. The Madison Botanical Congress indorsed the word 'ecology' as the designation of this part of physiology; and only a few days later Professor Burdon-Sanderson, in his Presidential address before the biological section of the

British Association, outlined the science and traced the origin of the name ecology, of which he made use.

Ecology, therefore, is the name under which we are to attempt the orderly arrangement of the facts, observations and deductions composing the science in which, to quote Burdon-Sanderson, "those qualities of mind which especially distinguish the naturalist find their highest exercise." The first independent treatise on the subject is by Wiesner (Vienna, 1889), and is an excellent model, while Ludwig's work, issued a few months since (Stuttgart, 1895), which is the second and to the present time only similar work, cannot be so highly praised. A work in English is greatly to be desired.

Having disposed of the external or sociological economy of the adult plant under the heading of ecology, we turn to the consideration of the internal or individual economy. This is the portion of physiology now in the ascendency, and the part which is usually more particularly intended under the present usage of the term vegetable physiology. The tendency is to restrict the titular use of the term to this part of the subject alone, which is to be approved. This gives us three well-defined departments in the science of the activities of plants: caliology, ecology and physiology.

Physiology, in the restricted sense, deals with the most vital of problems, how the individual lives. It pertains to the way in which plants breathe, secure and use their food, adjust themselves to light, heat, moisture, and the contact of other bodies. It deals with what botanists in the days of Linnæus, and even down to within the last fifty years, would have called the products of the *vis vitalis.* It desires to know what the specific energies of the plant are capable of accomplishing; in short, what is going on within the plant in the way of life processes. As will be readily seen, the whole matter is summed up in an exhibition of energy, which in former days was called vital energy, and thought to reside exclusively in living organisms, but now held to be only a special manifestation of the general physical forces of the universe.

The energies of plants fall into two categories, those which bring about changes in the intimate structure of vegetable substances, and those which bring about movement; and hence we call physiology a superstructure whose foundation is chemistry and physics. The present great advance in the science may, in large measure, be traced to the wonderful advances in the sciences of chemistry and physics, which have supplied facts and methods to assist the physiologist in his study of life processes.

Yet it would be an egregious mistake to suppose that physiology is but a dependency of chemistry and physics. The substitution of the so-called mechanical philosophy of life for the old vitalistic philosophy has not in any way rendered the vital activities less wonderful, or the protoplasmic display of energy less complex, less inscrutable, or less *sui generis.* The meaning of the word life shows no likelihood of being solved until the chemical and physical constitution of the protoplasmic molecule is understood, and that is too far away to make speculation at this time worth while; and so we need not quarrel with those who fancy that even when that advanced goal is reached the problem will not be solved, but a mysterious residuum will still exist to endow protoplasm with autonomy. Be that as it may, the path of present advancement keeps steadily onward in the clear light of physical laws, and ignores the nearness of of mystical, unfathomable shadows.

But returning from this long digression in separating physiology into the three reasonably distinct sciences—caliology, ecology and physiology proper—we will pro-

ceed with the inquiry regarding the present scientific status and its course of attainment in each of the three branches. It is not, however, any part of my purpose to give a philosphical or historial disquisition upon the subject, but merely to point out a few landmarks to enable us to get our bearings, so that we may spy out the land and obtain some opinion of what there may be good or bad in it.

The subject of caliology, that is, the various phases of juvenescence, including especially the dynamics of the young cell, has not yet received systematic presentation. Although a vast array of facts have been recorded, mostly to be sure as the concomitants of morphological studies and scattered so widely as to be almost lost, yet the value of the subject as a separate inquiry has not yet much impressed itself upon botanical students. There are, doubtless, most excellent reasons for this, not in any wise dependent upon the importance or attractiveness of the subject. The action of a machine as a whole depends upon the interaction of its parts; and to fully understand its operation requires a knowledge of its mechanism. No adequate theory of the physiological processes in the mature organism was possible until the character of the cellular framework and the distribution of tissues had been well worked out; and in the investigation of cellular physiology there occurs the same inherent difficulty. The structure of the cell in all its microscopic detail must be ascertained, and when the microscope fails us there must be well-framed theories of physical organization of the parts before solid advancement in understanding cellular activity can be expected.

The labors of Strasburger have been especially noteworthy in establishing an adequate morphological basis for the interpretation of cellular activity. If we were to point to a single work as particularly conspicuous in this connection it would be his *Zellbildung und Zelltheilung* (1875), which introduced hardening and staining methods into the study of the cell, and may be said to have created a new school of histologists, even more conspicuously represented among zoölogists, possibly, than among botanists. Great accuracy and a far clearer interpretation have been attained by the new methods, causing a rapid accumulation of trustworthy facts regarding the parts of the cell, especially of the reproductive cell and its neighbors, and of the succession of changes as the young organism or as the histogenic elements pass toward maturity. In this important work America can count some able investigators and valuable contributions, especially in making known the development of the metaspermic embryo and accompanying changes.

Morphological knowledge of the cell and of the stages in reproduction must necessarily be followed by inquiry into physiological processes. Already the writings of De Vries, Strasburger, Klebs, Vöchting, Wiesner and Vines have indicated the directions for study. The greatest impulse to the physiological study of reproduction, however, has been given by Weismann, although not himself a botanist, and not drawing heavily from the botanical storehouse to support his theories. Nägeli's idioplastic theory of 1884, and De Vries's later theories, have not of themselves been sufficient to arouse botanical enthusiasm The whole domain of caliology is suffering, in fact, for leaders—men chiefly known for their researches in this field. The science needs a Linnæus, a Sachs or a Gray to bring it into prominence and to inspire enthusiasm and a following. Some day it will be in vogue.

Upon turning to ecology, we find the conditions wholly changed. There are elements of popularity in the science that have made some of its topics familiar to the general reader, even before the boundaries of

the science have been mapped. The fascinating and epoch-making observations of Charles Darwin on the pollination of orchids and other flowers, at the same time bringing to light the long lost Pompeian-like treasures of Sprengel, gave an impulse to a line of study still full of promise. The extensive writings of Müller, Delpino, and in our own country Charles Robertson, have provided large stores of knowledge, and at the same time opened up attractive vistas for further observation.

Thus we might enumerate many other topics, which are more or less familiar to every one having the slightest acquaintance with botany, and to some others as well. If we ask how these matters came to be so widely known, the answer is not far to seek, and not obscure. The marvellous inspiration which came with the writings of Charles Darwin, and the fact that he cultivated ecological subjects more than any other, together with his theories of adaptation and natural selection which provided a key to the riddles of nature, making what were before matters of course now matters of the liveliest import, turned the attention of the botanical world, and of all other lovers of plants as well, even of some who cannot be placed in either class, in this direction. We may call Darwin the father of vegetable ecology, for had he not written, the field would have lain largely uncultivated and uninteresting.

In America the year 1887 saw the establishment of a series of State institutions, which gave a wonderful influence to the study of ecology. American botany owes much to the Agricultural Experiment Stations, especially in promoting a knowledge of vegetable pathology and ecology. Together with the Agricultural Department of the general government, they have enabled American botanists to become the leading investigators and writers upon pathological subjects, giving a position and imparting a value to the science of plant diseases, both scientific and practical, that ten years ago would have been inconceivable. What has been done for pathology is likely to be done for ecology, as it is the second subject in importance cultivated by station botanists. In the latter science the assistance of the Agricultural Colleges is also important, for in a few years the subject will undoubtedly hold a commanding position in the curriculum of the agricultural and general science courses of these institutions, and be regarded as the culminating and leading feature of a course of botanical study. It may seem presumptuous and fanciful to claim so much and be so positive in face of the fact that at the present time the subject is a *nomen incognitum* to the makers of curricula in these institutions; but careful examination of the subject-matter of the science shows that even in its present rather chaotic condition it embraces more points of vital interest to the lover and cultivator of plants than other departments of botany, being less recondite, and yet at the same time underlaid with a broad and attractive philosophy. What is most needed at present is a suitable text-book; for the value of the subject will be more quickly recognized when it is displayed in well arranged form.

It would be interesting and profitable to take a survey of the development of the different branches and topics of the science, but I shall content myself with barely mentioning one or two which especially flourish in this country. Recently a new life has been infused into the study of floras and the distribution of plants by what is called the 'biological' method, the inspiration having been derived in the first place from the zoölogists. This method, which has so far been most successfully applied to limited areas in the western part of the United States, undertakes an explanation of the present location of forms by considering severally and collectively the various external and

inherent factors promoting and restricting their development, including the reciprocal influence of proximity. Of the names prominent in this connection, those of Coville, Trelease and MacMillan are especially worthy of mention. The last has done good service by calling attention to the significance of tension lines, in his account of the 'Metaspermæ of the Minnesota Valley.' There is a phase of phylogenetic study which has received some attention of late, in form of the breeding of plants. It is a subject especially adapted to experiment station work. The leader in this line of research, L. H. Bailey, has also materially promoted ecological studies by his numerous biogenetic and other writings.

Coming to physiology, *sensu stricto*, we find the domain of the science so well defined and its several areas so well cultivated that a clear statement of its main problems is now possible. Not much advancement was made before the beginning of the present century. The most notable achievements had been the publication of Hales' brilliant work on the pressure and movement of sap, which introduced the physical side of physiology to the world, and Ingenhousz's equally entertaining volume upon his discoveries regarding the uses of green organs, which introduced the chemical side of physiology to the world. The century was ushered in by Knight's classical essays, in which it was pointed out, among other things, that there was a substantial reason why roots grow downward and stems upward, and by De Saussure's researches upon respiration and other chemico-physiological matters. It is worth mention that Hales, Ingenhousz, Knight and De Saussure were not botanists, although they cultivated botanical subjects; neither were Senebier, Du Hamel, Dutrochet, Liebig, Boussingault and others, who assisted in laying the foundations of the science, but were physicists, chemists and horticulturists. And to this day much important data is contributed to the science by workers in other fields.

Thus facts accumulated, important discoveries were made, and the mysteries of the life processes in plants were gradually unfolded. But it was not until 1865 that the science was given the commanding position due to it. Then appeared the first treatise which set forth the phenomena and laws of vital processes with due regard to proportion, and with clear philosophical insight. Sachs, in his 'Experimental Physiology,' became the founder of the science in its modern aspect. He set forth with critical discrimination the most important matters pertaining to the organism's relation to light, heat, electricity and gravity, the processes of metabolism, nutrition and respiration, and the movement of water and gases in the plant. With rare foresight he excluded all, or nearly all, topics not strictly belonging within the true scope of the science, and presented the whole subject-matter in an entirely original form, breaking away from the customs of his predecessors and adopting advanced scientific methods. It was an epoch-making book. As Strasburger has recently said in his history of botany in Germany, "the work at once restored vegetable physiology to its place at the center of scientific research."

The book has never been translated into English, and so, while it stimulated the study of physiology in Germany, and physiological laboratories soon became common, led by the famous one at Würzburg, presided over by Sachs, American botany felt little of the new movement until the appearance of Sach's 'Text-book' in English dress a decade later. Even then the new science (for such it was in America) gained but an insecure footing. After another decade, in 1885, appeared the first, and to the present the only, treatise on physiological botany by an American author. This

was written by Goodale in response to the desire of Asa Gray to have the several parts of his 'Text-book for Colleges' expanded into separate treatises in order to more fully represent the status of botanical science. As late as 1872 Dr. Gray contemplated writing the work himself, but his time proving insufficient he assigned the task to his worthy colleague. The title is used in its broad sense, and included histological anatomy, ecology and caliology, as well as physiology proper, the last being by no means the most conspicuous part of the book. The encyclopedic fulness of the work better adapted it for a reference-book to accompany a course of lectures than as a text-book. It greatly helped the science in America however, especially as it stimulated experimental study by a set of laboratory exercises given as an appendix. The year following appeared Vines's 'Physiology of Plants,' in some respects the most philosophical and well-digested presentation of the science yet written in any language; and only a year later still came Sach's new treatise on the same subject. These two works were too bulky to serve well as text-books for undergraduate students, but were a source of inspiration to maturer students and to investigators. The present year, completing the third decade since the physiological epoch began, has seen the altogether admirable, although brief, account of the science by Vines, forming part of his 'Text-book of Botany,' and two excellent laboratory manuals, one by Darwin and Acton, of England, and the other an English adaptation, by MacDougal, of a German work. With these treatises elementary instruction is well provided for, and their effect is already seen in the rapid introduction of the study as a portion of botanical instruction in colleges, and even high schools, throughout the country.

Thus far only the pedagogical side of the science has been brought prominently forward; but what can we say of the research side? So far as America is concerned, there is no research side; the science is equipped and expanded with facts and theories from foreign sources. A few papers embodying original investigations have been published by American teachers, but they were the result of studies carried on in German laboratories. A dozen or two papers have, indeed, been issued from our own laboratories within the last five years, but all of them have been the work of students, mostly in preparation for a degree. America has nothing to show that can in any wise compare with the important discoveries made and still being made by Francis Darwin in England, De Vries in Holland, Wiesner in Austria, or Sachs, Pfeffer, Vöchting, Frank and others in Germany. There are ample reasons why this state of things need not be considered humiliating, and yet it is to be deplored as most unfortunate.

Let us turn to a hasty examination of some of the problems of physiology which await solution. They stand out prominently in every chapter of the science, and suggest to the scientific mind most tempting opportunities for original investigation. The nutrition of plants is so imperfectly understood that it may appropriately be said to be a bundle of problems. So little do we know of the processes that even what constitutes the plant's food is in doubt. We know, for instance, that lime and magnesia are taken into the plant, but whether they are directly nutritive by becoming part of living molecules, or whether they serve as aids to nutritive processes, or become the means of disposing of waste materials within the organism, cannot be definitely stated. And to a greater or less extent similar conditions exist respecting potassium, phosphorous, sulphur, iron and chlorine, which in fact embrace all the so-called mineral elements of plants. The move-

ments and transformations of the two most characteristic elements of organic structures, carbon and nitrogen, are a little better known. Some progress has been made in tracing the steps by which the simple molecule of carbon dioxide derived from the atmosphere is built up into the complex, organic molecule of starch. But the further process by which the starch molecule combines with others to form the most complex and important of all plant substances, protoplasm, is yet an almost complete mystery. The story of the progress of discovery in ascertaining the means by which plants get their nitrogen is a fascinating one, and is not yet ended. These matters in part lie at the very foundation of the most fundamental of industries, agriculture. Intensive farming, and the highest success in the raising of all kinds of crops, is greatly promoted by a knowledge of the nutritive processes in plants. The botanists who thirty-five years ago demonstrated that carbon was taken into the plant through the leaves, and not to any material extent through the roots, struck a theme that revolutionized agricultural practice and added greatly to the wealth of the world. The more recent discovery of the connection of symbionts with leguminous and some other plants, by which the abundant supply of nitrogen in the air is converted into food available for higher plants, has also greatly affected agricultural practice. The whole subject of the nutrition of plants is so bound up with intelligent farming and all manner of plant cultivation that advancement of this part of physiology means an increase in material prosperity as well as in scientific knowledge. Ample provision for its prosecution would be a valuable investment for any people, and particularly so for the people of these United States.

There are many ways in which plants show similar physiological processes to those of animals; and plants being simpler in organization, their study may often be made to promote a knowledge of animal physiology. The greatest similarity between the two kingdoms lies in various phases of nutrition, respiration and reproduction. The greatest divergence is to be found in the manifestation of irritability. Those fundamental processes upon which being and continued existence depend are much the same throughout animate nature, but the processes by which the organism communicates with the world outside of itself, and through which it is enabled to adjust itself to environmental conditions, the processes which in their highest development are known as sensations, have attained great differentiation, running along essentially different lines of development. The prevalent view that plants occupy an intermediate position between the mineral and the animal kingdoms is not true in any important respect. Neither is it true that the faculties of animals, especially of the lower animals, are foreshadowed in plants. No just conception of animate nature can be obtained by conceiving it to lie in a single ascending series. It constitutes two diverging and branching series, like the blades and stems in a tuft of grass, which we may assume have been derived from a common germ. There are two fundamental characters which manifested themselves early in phylogenetic development, one structural and one physiological. The structural character of the histologic integument of the organism, in animals soft and highly elastic, in plants firm and but slightly elastic, gave rise to the two series of forms, structurally considered, which we call animals and plants. The physiological character of free locomotion for most animals and a fixed position for most plants determined the line of separation for the development of those powers of the organism classed as irritability and sensation. So great have been the differences which these funda-

mental characters have brought about that the stimulating action of external agents, such as light, heat and gravity, have produced very diverse powers in the two kingdoms. Animals have a wonderful mechanism which enables them to see, while plants have a no less wonderfully specialized sensitiveness by which they assume various positions to secure more or less illumination. Animals have a sense of equipoise, but plants have a very dissimilar and even more remarkable sense of verticality. And so on throughout the list of stimuli the reactions are not the same, but are differentiated along entirely separate and divergent lines. The period is fortunately well past when physiology was chiefly cultivated with an *arrière pensée* as to its value for interpreting the functions in man, and hence, in claiming for this department of study the most exalted position, and the most intricate and interesting of botanical problems, we need not be distracted by any lurking *cui bono*, or feeling of having come short of ample returns for conscientious effort, although the facts do not elucidate any point in human or animal physiology. Some of the dissatisfaction which caused G. H. Lewes to abandon the pursuit of his early dreams of a comparative psychology, and M. Foster to discontinue his early study of comparative general physiology, as both authors have assured us they did, may possibly be traceable to a lack of singleness of purpose in taking the good of the organism itself in each grade of development as the point of view in pursuing the study. But as all vital activity rests upon a common basis, it is not improbable that the key to some of the fundamental mysteries of physiological action will yet be found in a study of the well developed functions exhibited in the simpler, nerveless structure of plants, and thus a truer philosophy of life in general be attained.

In closing, a few words in regard to the future of vegetable physiology in America may not be out of place. In many ways the conditions under which botany exists in America are very different from those in other countries. In Europe the class-rooms are filled chiefly with medical students, for whom a moderate amount of botany is considered essential, and the incentive for advanced work in most instances is not strong. In this country the botanical classes are larger, with more varied interests, of which medicine forms only a small part, and the study usually stands upon the same footing as that of the other sciences. The attainment of equal recognition as a substantial element of an educational course, superseding the notion that it constituted only an efflorescence to be classed with belles-lettres and other refinements, was the beginning of a prosperous period. One of the effects of this prosperity was to make the botanist more jealous of his reputation, and with the beginning of the nineties he entered a vigorous protest against the appropriation by the zoölogists of the terms 'biology' and 'biologist.' It was fair evidence that botanists had awakened to a recognition of common interests with the rest of the world, and of the advantages of keeping well abreast with the times. Later, the systematists, finding that other departments of natural history had devised improved ways for naming natural objects, undertook to fall into line and reform the method of naming plants, which led to the first serious break in unanimity which American botanists have known. So warm has been the contention that a few have descended to personal reflection and invective, which were never before known to mar the amicable adjustment of differences of opinion among American botanists. But this storm is likely to pass and leave the atmosphere clearer, brighter and more invigorating; and it is to be hoped that no trace will remain of an interruption of good fellowship and

general comraderie which has heretofore distinguished the botanists of this country.

It is the broadened horizon for botany in general which makes the outlook for vegetable physiology so especially auspicious. This is the country of all others where its practical and educational importance is likely to be most fully recognized, and where the best equipped and most independent laboratories can most readily be established. One difficulty yet besets it, the difficulty of making known what is needed. Botany has not before required much more than a table near a window for its miscroscope and reagents, a case for the herbarium and a few shelves for books, and it is difficult to make it understood that the new department needs rooms with special fittings and expensive apparatus. If there were only one well equipped laboratory in the country it might be cited as a model, but even that advantage is yet lacking. It can be explained that the chemical side of the subject needs much of the usual chemical apparatus and supplies with many special pieces, that the physical side requires similar provision, and that many pieces of apparatus are demanded which cannot be obtained in the markets owing to the newness of the subject, necessitating provision for making apparatus of both metal and glass; but the explanation rarely conveys a full appreciation of how essential and extensive this equipment is expected to be. In the fitting of the laboratory there should be rooms for the chemical work with gas, water, sinks and hoods, and rooms for the physical work, with shafting for transmitting power to clinostats and centrifugals, with devices for regulating moisture and temperature, and with as ample provision for light as in a greenhouse. There should also be dark rooms into which a definite amount of light may be introduced by means of arc lamps, and other special rooms for special lines of study. It is easy to see that a well stocked greenhouse is required to supply healthy plants when needed for study, but the value of a botanic garden may not be so apparent. It need not only be pointed out here, however, that Charles Darwin examined 116 species of plants belonging to 76 genera to prepare his brochure on climbing plants, and it might have been more complete with greater opportunities.

The man who is to preside over a department of this kind, in which research work is to be carried on and instruction undertaken suitable to a university, cannot be one of St. Thomas Aquinas's *homo unius libri*, for physiology touches upon the adjacent sciences to a far greater extent than do other departments of botany, and requires a more intimate acquaintance with a wide range of knowledge.

After careful consideration of the subject, it seems safe to predict that the next great botanical wave that sweeps over America will be a physiological one. As the green chlorophyll grain of vegetation is the great primal storage battery absorbing and fixing the energy of the sun, and making it available for doing the work of the world—in fact, supplying nearly all the power, except that from wind and waters required in commercial enterprise, whether derived finally from animal force, wood, coal, steam or electricity, so the subject which includes the fundamental study of a matter of such universal importance will without doubt eventually attain to a place in public esteem commensurate with its importance.

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CURRENT NOTES ON PHYSIOGRAPHY (XVI.).

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC MONOGRAPHS.

THE fourth number of this series is an essay on the 'Present and Extinct Lakes of Nevada,' by Professor I. C. Russell, of the University of Michigan. This is a serviceable abstract of the fuller treatment of the